

**Human Services Advisory Council
Minutes of the March 8, 2007 Meeting**

HSAC Members Present: Leslie Gordon, David Rogers, Mary Beth Sefton, Gail Gulliksen

Council Liaison: Hal Lippman

Staff: Pam Doran

Guest: John Williams

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 7:02 by Chair David Rogers.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes from the February meeting were approved with one correction.

Report from the Chair: The Chair had no report.

NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion with City Council Liaison: Prior to this meeting, Chair David Rogers contacted Mr. Hal Lippman, the Council Liaison, to provide him with background information on HSAC's activities, interests and concerns. This discussion touched on topics such as membership issues, consolidation with other Boards and commissions, and HSAC's agenda for 2007, including concerns as to how HSAC can best serve City needs.

As the discussion began, Hal commended the "bottoms up" approach HSAC is taking in determining its future activities. Concerning membership issues with this and other boards, Hal asked for input as to how Council might change its approach in recruiting members. Hal also noted that it is becoming harder to recruit candidates for City Council positions as well. Hal endorsed the plan for HSAC to meet with the Senior Commission and Housing Commissions to explore the possibility of consolidation.

One concern expressed in this discussion was that Council's recently adopted Vision Statement did not mention providing human services to residents. There is brief mention of diversity in the document, but no reference to specific issues addressed by HSAC and H.H.S. It was noted that human services are being worked in to the implementation strategy and strategic plan.

HSAC continues to have some concern about the Community Services Fund and human service needs in the City. First is the concern that some past grant recipients have a strong sense of entitlement, and have approached Council directly when their requested funding was not fully granted through the CFS process. Hal noted that Council is aware of this issue and is working to ensure that the CSF process will be followed in the future. Another continuing concern is how to determine what needs exist in the City, so that the funds granted through the CSF will best serve the community. HSAC members feel challenged to understand what the priorities should be for human services in Falls Church, as well as what services are currently provided. Although some information has been made available through various needs assessments, etc., because services are offered by several different providers (i.e. City staff, Community Services Board, non-profits) it is difficult to get a clear view of what is actually happening in the City.

HSAC expressed interest in being an advocacy group to increase the public's awareness of the human services in the City. Pam noted that H.H.S. and HSAC are sponsoring an ad in the News-Press to publicize the Community Services Fund and the activities it is supporting this year. It was suggested that this announcement could be printed on flyers and placed in the library, City Hall, the Community Center, etc.

HSAC also discussed the Boards and Commissions Roundtable scheduled for March 22nd. This will be an opportunity for the commission chairs and council members to review and evaluate the performance and need for boards and commissions. One suggestion is that 5 or 6 main goals or interests can be identified and the boards and commissions be reorganized around those points. The mechanics of consolidation/reorganization would be identified after this discussion.

Finally, Hal encouraged HSAC to approach Council if they feel there is a need for additional funding for the CSF, or if they identify any other specific concern or need in the City. HSAC thanked Hal for his input and support.

Agenda for 2007: HSAC decided to establish the agenda for 2007 after the Boards and Commissions Roundtable is held and possible consolidation with other Boards and Commissions is full explored.

Endorsement of Fair Housing Month and Affordable Housing Week: It was moved, seconded, and passed unanimously that the Human Services Advisory Council endorses Fair Housing Month and Affordable Housing Week. Pam Doran noted that the City Clerk is preparing resolutions for Council on these two events.

OLD BUSINESS: There was no old business.

OTHER BUSINESS: Mary Beth Sefton shared with the group a manual entitled the “Wyoming Citizen’s Government Academy.” It is distributed as part of a city government sponsored program in Wyoming, Michigan, to increase citizens awareness of city offices and how the local government functions. The manual will be passed on to City Manager Wyatt Shields.

REPORT FROM STAFF:

Pam Doran reported that City Council will meet on April 9th and 23rd, if HSAC wishes to make a public presentation of the CSF recommendation letter. David Rogers tentatively agreed to present HSAC’s recommendations on the 9th; all commissioners are invited to attend.

The City Council has requested input from advisory groups on both the Hekemian Project and the City Center project.

Pam reported that services to persons with disabilities are being looked at, including the Community Services Board services. The CSB is considering renovating the Pendleton House or moving the residents to another location; Sunrise is also considering adding a facility with housing for persons with disabilities. HSAC requested that representatives the Community Services Board be invited to a future meeting for a briefing/update on their activities.

The HSAC meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

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